



Durham

Environmental Affairs Board

Meeting Notes

June 22, 2004 ■ 6:00 p.m.

Conference Room A
Ground Floor, City Hall

Meeting Notes

Members Present: Will Anderson, Sharon Beard, Darryl Roberts, Kathi Beratan, Judy Kincaid, Dock Terrell, Bill Harnett, Rick Crume, and Howard Glasgow

Members Absent: Matthew Greenwolfe and Ahrash Bissell

Guests Present:

Staff Present: Frank Duke, Sara Young, Vicki Westbrook, Michael Stock, Chuck Hill, and Kathleen Snyder

Meeting Notes:

Chairman Kathi Beratan presided and called the meeting to order. Dock Terrell made a motion to approve the meeting notes, Sharon Beard seconded, and it was approved unanimously.

Kathi Beratan announced that this was her last meeting as Chairman of the Board. Darryl Roberts led the Board in expressing their thanks for her service.

Introduction of New Board Member

Kathi Beratan introduced to the Board a new member, Howard Glasgow. Howard Glasgow works for the NCSU Center for Applied Aquatic Ecology as an Assistant Research Professor and Associate Director. Dr. Glasgow is filling the Soil and Water Conservation District position for the Board. He briefly talked about his background and interests. Dr. Glasgow is interested in water resources and quality, but has a wide range of experiences with natural environmental issues. He has participated in several successful stream restoration projects and been awarded a number of grants for environmental projects. The board welcomed Dr. Glasgow and expressed their pleasure in his presence on the Board.

Old Business

1. **Elections** – Kathi Beratan opened the floor for elections. The nominations presented by the nominating committee were read: Sharon Beard for Chairman, Ahrash Bissell as Vice Chairman, and Will Anderson for Secretary. Chairman Beratan solicited for any other nominations. No one on the Board offered other nominations. At this point, the nominations were closed and the Board voted unanimously for the slate of Sharon Beard as Chairman, Ahrash Bissell as Vice Chairman, and Will Anderson as Secretary.

2. **Staff Presentations on the UDO and the Comprehensive Plan** – Sara Young and Michael Stock made the staff presentation on the UDO. They passed out a memo that highlighted the responses to the comments that the EAB made earlier in the year. Kathi Beratan asked about why the stormwater ordinances were not included in the UDO. The answer was that the elected officials felt that there was too great a difference between the County ordinance and the City ordinance to attempt to reconcile at this time. The stormwater ordinances are a high priority and will be added to the UDO after it has been adopted. Sara Young explained that the UDO has numerous text amendments every year and that the EAB should keep after elected officials if they wanted to see specific regulations changed. She went on to say that individual citizens could also bring text amendments forward for consideration. Another key area of discussion was the plant lists and the maintenance of them. Michael Stock and Sara Young responded to the questions to the satisfaction of the Board. Also, the requested solar access text addition was not included due to the fact that it is a building code issue.

Kathleen Snyder introduced the information on the Comprehensive Plan. A copy of Chapter Seven was handed out to the Board. Ms. Snyder stated that the changes that the EAB had suggested were largely editorial and that Keith Luck had made them in the draft. She went on to say that the one policy suggested by the Board that was too much to be just an editorial change was adopted by the steering committee and is in current draft. Judy Kincaid had a few other comments that she wanted to be included in the Comprehensive Draft. Frank Duke noted that one of her suggestions needed to read as the Inspection Department instead of the Planning Department. Only the suggestion that policy 4.2.5b in the plan should be removed sparked dissension among the Board members. Darryl Roberts felt that this policy providing recognition for excellent examples of private sector high performance design was an activity that the Board should pursue. A discussion ensued as to how much effort would be required to effectively do this and if it was the best use of the EAB's resources. A vote was conducted on Judy Kincaid's suggests and the Board voted 8 to 1 in favor of submitting the comments as written. Darryl Roberts dissented.

New Business

1. **Excused Absences Definition** – Dock Terrell suggested that the discussion of excused absence definitions be moved before the air quality initiative discussion. The Board agreed and a sheet of example excused absence definitions was distributed. Mr. Roberts inquired what is the purpose of defining an excused absence definition. The Board was reminded that the appointing bodies of boards and commissions had concerns about attendance and reappointments. It was further stated that these bodies have asked that all of the boards keep records on attendance and to create more definitive details as to what constitutes an excused absence. After considering the examples for a few moments, the Board voted to defer this decision until the next meeting.

2. **Air Quality Initiative Discussion** - At the last meeting, the EAB was presented with an action item request from the County Commissioners that the EAB develop air quality initiatives for Durham County. This request was prompted by the current EPA designation of non-attainment status for the region. In starting this discussion, Kathi Beratan asked what the role of the EAB, as a citizen advisory board, is and should be in Durham City and County government. Rick Crume asked to hear the official wording of the EAB's purpose. Ms. Snyder read the outlined purposes from the Interlocal Agreement and the EAB bylaws. Darryl Roberts stated that he felt that the Board needed to reach beyond this room and into the community. There was concern voiced about the scope of the Board's work and was it only to provide advice to the County Commissioner's and City Council. A member said that the Board should develop strategies to approach projects, such as delving further into issues discussed in the Wake County Air Quality Report review done by the Board. Kathi Beratan came back to the point that the Board needed to have a process with order in order to accomplish what the Board needed and wanted to do. There were a couple of comments about how air quality could be made an issue for the general public. Darryl Roberts asked what the socio-economic impacts of poor air quality. Bill Harnett answered by saying that the key thing to do is to educate people as to how it affects them in a personal way. He went on to say that air quality is not typically a point or a hot spot type of pollution. Mr. Harnett also said that unfortunately the ability to mitigate some of the largest problems relating to air quality and individuals is hampered by the socio-economic issues and perhaps private business partnerships could be formed to help provide relief. Again, the question arose as to how should the Board approach specific goals and funding. Judy Kincaid recommended that a Community and Environment Office could conduct such programs. She feels like the municipalities do not have policies in place to that deal with air quality. Ms. Snyder asked if anyone had the knowledge of just what the municipalities were doing or what resources they might have to deal with air pollution. Ms. Kincaid asked if Ms. Snyder would draw up a memo to the City Manager's and County Manager's offices requesting information on any programs or activities that the municipalities are engaged in that protect or effect air quality. Chairman Beratan remarked that the EAB needed to find a way to convince the elected officials to act on air quality and environmental concerns. This could be by hiring staff to work on these initiatives. Mr. Harnett suggested that financial rewards might be used to encourage private businesses to participate in programs to reduce pollution. After further discussion, the Board agreed to have Bill Harnett, because of his expertise in air quality, review the ideas and approaches generated by the Board and to return at the next meeting with a general game plan. He agreed to do this with the input of the Board over the next couple of weeks via email or any other means that members wish to use.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathleen Snyder, Planner
June 24, 2004